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New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda items 48 and 62 (*continued*)

2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

Note by the Secretary-General (A/61/218 and Corr.1)

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General (A/61/212)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/61/69 and Add.1)

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General (A/61/213)

Mrs. Sahu (Thailand): Allow me at the outset to commend the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on Africa's development (A/61/212), which highlights the significant development in Africa and the challenges the continent is facing, as well as the support provided by the international community over the past year. The report also strongly illustrates the unprecedented commitment of the United Nations to work with African countries in realizing its development potential.

Before proceeding further, I should like to associate my delegation with the statements made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by the representative of the Philippines on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

There is no doubt that the question of peace and prosperity in Africa remains close to our hearts. Promoting peace and strengthening socio-economic development in Africa in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has long been included among the agenda items discussed in this Hall. Achieving the Goals will be possible only through a concrete partnership among Africa, the international community, the private sector and civil society.

We share the Secretary-General's view, as presented in his report on the work of the Organization (A/61/1), that the special needs of Africa demand urgent and concerted efforts as well as continued and unabated support on the part of all stakeholders. We also share the Secretary-General's view that in recent years we have witnessed an increase in the international community's commitment, as well as Africa's own determination, to achieve the MDGs.

Conflict settlement and peace processes are being carried out in many areas, while the role of the African Union and the joint cooperation at both the national and regional levels under the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) have been strengthened. That demonstrates Africa's commitment

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to determine its own future through African-owned initiatives and active African involvement. It is also encouraging to learn that the official development assistance pledges and commitments made to Africa by the United Nations, international institutions, the international community and non-governmental organizations are apparently increasing. We particularly welcome the concrete support provided to the region, such as the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, the Millennium Villages initiatives and other projects that have been undertaken in recent years within various frameworks.

In light of those constructive prospects, Thailand joins the international community in supporting the continued efforts to promote the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa and remains committed to fully participating in joint initiatives either on our own or through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Group of 77 and China as well as other international forums.

In the last few years, Thailand has intensified its efforts to expand cooperation with African countries. We designated 2005-2006 as "the Year of Africa" to serve as a policy guideline for our bilateral and trilateral cooperation programmes with donor countries and international organizations, with the aim of advancing partnership in areas that will ensure a long-term positive impact on Africa's development, particularly in human resource development and capacity-building.

Based on the principle of self-sufficient development and with the aim of helping countries in Africa to diversify their productive bases, Thailand is carrying out technical cooperation programmes for Africa in wide-ranging fields of common interest. Around 100 scholarships for training courses and exchanges of experts have been offered this year in the fields of agriculture, rural development, development of service industries and small and medium enterprises. We remain committed to further expand our cooperative partnership with Africa through various forms of cooperation, including the annual international training courses offered by the Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency.

In the area of health, Thailand has provided technical cooperation to directly help African countries combat the HIV/AIDS and malaria epidemics. Thai experts have transferred technology for the production of medicine and have helped to set up factories to effectively produce the medicine at low cost. Medical personnel and equipment, as well as scholarships for African medical staff, have also been offered. We believe that those efforts are making a noticeable impact. Tanzania now has an affordable anti-malarial drug called Thaitanzunate, as well as an affordable treatment for HIV called TTVIR. These medicines are saving lives and should help more countries to stand on their own feet. The West African region is also benefiting from a similar programme. We hope to see more of that kind of cooperation spreading throughout Africa.

Sharing experiences in avian influenza prevention and control is another field in which Thailand is currently working closely with Africa. Development partners, such as the United Nations Development Programme, are providing essential financial and technical assistance. Thailand is successfully cooperating with our neighbouring countries in setting up an information sharing system to help monitor outbreaks and report them quickly to relevant international organizations. We are prepared to cooperate with all affected countries in sharing our experiences and best practices. Strengthening partnership for cooperation with Africa will always remain an important element of the foreign policy of Thailand.

In the past years, we have witnessed a wide range of assistance and actions undertaken within the multilateral framework. However, the path towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals for Africa is still long and there are still many obstacles along the way. Sincere and committed international support, particularly steady and predictable financial assistance, remains a priority for the overall development and poverty eradication strategy. Innovative financing for development and capacity-building programmes are essential, in order for Africa to take advantage of globalization and to benefit from the expansion of international trade. Many commitments have been made to Africa and only the implementation of those commitments will finally lead to concrete and long-lasting results for sustainable development in the region.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First, the Chinese delegation would like to thank Secretary-General Mr. Kofi Annan for his report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

(A/61/212). China associates itself with the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. This year marks the fifth anniversary of the launching of NEPAD. Over the past five years, African countries have made enormous efforts to implement NEPAD by taking vigorous steps in the areas of infrastructure, information and communication technologies, health, education, environment, agriculture, science and technology, gender mainstreaming and the African Peer Review Mechanism.

We highly appreciate such efforts and are glad to see that the African economy has, in recent years, maintained strong growth momentum and created conditions for poverty eradication and sustainable development. At the same time, the international community has made African development a top priority and has given more aid towards that goal. In order to implement the 2005 World Summit Outcome and the outcome of the recent High-level Meeting, some developed countries have taken practical steps to increase aid and debt relief. South-South cooperation, particularly between African and other developing countries, is expanding. Those are all positive elements that are conducive to African development.

However, as is indicated in the report of the Secretary-General, the main task of the international community is to consolidate that positive momentum and deliver on its commitments. African countries must pursue national development strategies, strengthen coordination among themselves and mobilize all resources to jointly promote the development of Africa. The international community should fulfil its aid commitments to Africa and help and support African countries in their development endeavours. The United Nations should strengthen collaboration and coordination of its support to NEPAD.

The Secretary-General's Advisory Panel on International Support for NEPAD emphasized in its recent report the importance of supervising the implementation of NEPAD. That is an important matter. Bearing in mind the progress made in implementing NEPAD last year and the relevant report under the item, the Chinese delegation wishes to make the following observations. First, the primary feature of NEPAD is that it is managed and owned by African countries. Guided by the needs of African countries, it mobilizes international assistance coordination and support for Africa's development. It is necessary to combine those two elements through regular dialogue.

The reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Panel have summarized the efforts of African countries and their work priorities. They have also indicated the insufficiencies of international support.

In terms of funds, in particular, there still exists a very big gap between international support and Africa's actual needs. We believe that comprehensive measures should be adopted to overcome the difficulties caused by the shortage of financial resources. Steps should be taken to ensure that existing funds are used in the most cost-effective way, according to the priorities set by African countries.

Keeping in mind the needs of African countries, we should continue to increase the financial input. In addition to emergency aid, debt relief and technical cooperation, we should provide additional financial assistance to African development. We should act from the long-term perspective and help African countries with capacity-building so that they will attract more foreign direct investment and improve their self-funding ability.

Secondly, NEPAD is pragmatic. One of its priorities is to help African countries integrate into the world economy and to make full use of the opportunities produced by economic globalization. Consequently, the international community needs to adopt a series of measures. Efforts should be made to correct trade distortions and expand African countries' trade opportunities. Countries should make joint efforts to resume the Doha Round at an early date, urge major developed countries to show political will, particularly in reducing agricultural subsidies, and expand market access for exports from African countries, thus bringing tangible benefits in multilateral trade to them.

We should make full use of the current favourable situation of high commodity prices to allow African countries to benefit from their resource advantages, which will improve their economic diversification. Trade assistance should be provided to help African countries to increase their participation in world trade and share in the benefits of economic globalization.

Thirdly, South-South cooperation can help African countries in their development. There are numerous developing countries, and each has its own strength. South-South cooperation, with its historical

tradition and new driving force, has huge potential. As a useful addition to North-South cooperation, the potential of South-South cooperation should be fully tapped. On this basis, we will vigorously promote South-South cooperation and do what we can to help implement NEPAD.

Over the past decade, China and Africa have treated each other with sincerity, supported each other, conducted South-South cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit and promoted common economic and social progress. China has vigorously supported African countries in implementing NEPAD. We established relations with its Secretariat right after its founding. The China-Africa Cooperation Forum, established in 2000, shares its goals with NEPAD in promoting mutually beneficial cooperation and common development. The two also have identical development priorities. We have adopted a wide spectrum of measures to help African countries.

Since 2000, the Chinese Government has cancelled 156 debts owed by 31 African countries of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative group and the least developed countries (LDCs), totalling 10.5 billion yuan.

The Chinese Government has also taken radical steps to give preferential treatment to African countries so as to allow more African products to enter the Chinese market. In 2005, the bilateral trade volume between China and Africa reached $39.746 billion, with a $2.38 billion Chinese deficit.

The Chinese Government also executed 63 aid projects in 48 African countries and regions, sent 54 shipments of goods. This involved a focus on agricultural development, infrastructure, construction, human resource training and medical and health cooperation.

Following the zero-tariff treatment given by China to some imported commodities from 25 LDCs in Africa starting on 1 January of last year. Equatorial Guinea, Angola and Senegal joined the group at the beginning of this year. The Chinese Government encourages Chinese enterprises with the capacity to do so to invest and build factories in Africa. By the end of last year, China's accumulated direct investment in Africa reached $1.18 billion, and more than 800 factories were built there.

Human resource cooperation is a key area of China-Africa cooperation. Last year, China invited 3,066 people from 50 African countries and regional organizations to come to China to receive training in foreign affairs, economics, trade, agriculture, forestry and auditing. China-Africa programmes on environmental protection cooperation and young volunteers have been launched. Currently, about 1,100 students from 46 African countries are in China with scholarships provided by the Chinese Government. At last year's China-Africa Forum meeting of education ministers, China announced a number of new measures, including the provision of training for 1,000 African education officials and teachers every year from 2006 to 2008, and doubling the number of African students enjoying Chinese Government scholarships in the coming five years.

A China-Africa Cooperation Forum summit meeting will be held in Beijing from 3 to 5 November 2006. Chinese and African leaders will focus on the theme of friendship, peace, cooperation and development, and will jointly draw up a blueprint for China-Africa friendly cooperation. I am confident that this will further enhance China's support to NEPAD in various fields.

China is the largest developing country in the world, and Africa is the continent with the largest number of developing countries. Over the past decade, our fate has been interlinked. The Chinese Government will, as always, continue to reinforce its cooperation with Africa and make its due contribution to the revitalization of the African continent.

Mr. Ehouzou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): Madam President, allow me first of all to say how much the delegation of Benin appreciates the high quality of the information contained in the various reports submitted by the Secretary-General by way of reference documents for our discussion on agenda items 48 and 62(a) and (b).

My delegation associates itself with the statement made yesterday by the Permanent Representative of South Africa, who spoke on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Benin welcomes this joint debate on the three items on our agenda, which very clearly confirms the link between peace and development. A very good example was given by the awarding of the Nobel Peace

Prize to Mr. Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh for his service to the poor through micro-financing.

It is good to note that the international community is not indifferent to the situation in Africa in a political, economic and social context. Africa projects the image of an unpredictable, unstable continent capable of the best, but also of the worst, where a large proportion of people live in the most abject poverty.

When we read the reports of the Secretary-General on the Decade to Roll Back Malaria, on the New Partnership for Africa's Development and on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, it emerges that African countries, both individually and collectively, have in recent years undertaken profound institutional reforms in order to create an enabling environment for sustained economic growth and development. At the same time, the social challenges and a certain reluctance to change in other areas jeopardize the achievements made and delay the true development of Africa's peoples.

The development of any country is a long-term process and the development of Africa as a continent cannot be realized overnight. That is why, despite efforts made by the African countries and despite the impressive figures enumerated by donors when they talk about their own assistance, the results achieved do not always live up to the objectives we have set.

Accordingly, we need to fully assess the various challenges that have to be met and propose long-term solutions. One of the first tools to start the development process is definitely good governance, because social inequalities and the absence of democracy lead to social tension and conflicts of interest at the same time as they exacerbate poverty.

In this context, Benin accordingly renews its commitment to democracy, good governance, combating corruption, the rule of law and respect for human dignity and human rights as preconditions for the establishment of an enabling environment for sustainable development. However, we must stress that whatever the progress made nationally in these various sectors and despite the good will of African countries to undertake institutional, political, economic and social reforms, no progress can be achieved if the international environment does not support national efforts and if the opportunities for change at the international level are almost non-existent.

One of the exogenous causes of conflict in Africa is the proliferation and illegal circulation of weapons coming into Africa from external sources. Benin believes that the international community can no longer reasonably continue to turn a deaf ear to the cries of distress of the thousands upon thousands of people — women and children — who, from one day to the next, are thrust on the path of exile as soon as tension arises out in Africa.

How can we understand that the young people mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General, who languish in destitution and want only the attention of generous donors to obtain a dollar per day for their survival, are the same people being armed and recruited by supposedly rebel groups or simply by unscrupulous individuals?

Benin believes it indecent to profess a desire for African peace and development, while quickly and surreptitiously fuelling tensions inherent in any society that could have been resolved by peaceful means. Benin firmly believes in the peaceful settlement of conflict, as well as in good neighbourly relations, because development is only possible in a peaceful environment.

Inherent within the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is the very rebirth of Africa itself. The transparent implementation of the main pillars of this programme, particularly in the area of agriculture, the environment, energy and information and communication technologies, will certainly enable Africa to truly get off the ground. This will provide better prospects to thousands of young Africans who will no longer be into forced exile or compelled to look elsewhere for a better future. It is important, therefore, that the support of the international community for the implementation of NEPAD seeks to carry out programmes, identified within a reasonable time frame, to enable them to have a direct impact on improving the living conditions of Africa's people.

The involvement of the international community must also be more conspicuous through an increase in official development assistance and in foreign direct investments, as well as through strengthened productive capacities in African countries. Efforts should also be continued in terms of good management of the foreign debt, in order to prevent countries that

might have benefited from debt cancellation measures from relapsing into the status quo ante.

Benin expresses its appreciation to all of Africa's development partners that have been tirelessly working for the recovery of our continent and agrees that nevertheless a lot remains to be done. It is a daunting challenge and bold action is extremely crucial because of Africa's 34 least developed countries. Benin therefore appeals to the sense of responsibility and solidarity of bilateral and multilateral partners so that together, in a spirit of partnership, the problems being faced by African countries — one of the most prominent being malaria — can find solutions that might help break this vicious cycle of poverty and marginalization.

Mr. . rias Cardenas (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which is an increasingly pluralist and diverse country, while at the same time progressively more committed to its historical and cultural roots, has been unswerving in its support for the struggle against hunger and poverty and for development within our country, in brother countries and, in particular, the countries of Africa. Our country has also been unswerving in efforts to urgently establish the necessary conditions for the sustainable development of our peoples.

The Bolivarian Government offers its support and cooperation to achieve the intensification and continuity of all assistance programmes and cooperation activities that are intended to achieve active participation in improving economic and social conditions of the peoples of Africa. This is a fundamental pillar in the consolidation of peace and security in the world.

In its cooperation with Africa, Venezuela is not merely giving what we have in excess. No, we are working with our brothers to achieve joint development. In our Afro-Latin countries, we are aware of an age-old African heritage that comes from our African roots. Venezuela is aware that the active solidarity of our people is a way of working together to make progress.

The United Nations system, we feel, is the ideal way of achieving international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Thus, the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has drafted a $3.8 million programme of cooperation with Africa, through the World Food Programme, particularly in regard to food aid intended to benefit the brother countries of Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. It has also undertaken a $4.3 million programme of emergency assistance grants for the brother countries of Kenya, the Gambia, Western Sahara and Somalia.

We also support the notion that the United Nations programme for Africa should seek to establish a comprehensive fr mework for support of the African Union Commission, which includes support for the NEPAD programme, that is itself based on the approaches adopted by African Governments, and in this way ensure that they are carried out in keeping with the real priorities of the region.

At present, the future bodes well for those relations and for the South-South cooperation encouraged by our country. The African peoples are very interested in this new kind of relationship among brother countries, which is being promoted in meetings within and outside the United Nations. Our Government, through the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and particularly the Office of the Vice-Minister for Africa, has drafted the Africa Agenda. It sets out a series of diplomatic, cultural, educational, health and cooperation activities and, in particular, expresses the fact that we take great pride in our African heritage.

We are associated with the Venezuelan network of Afro-descendants. In addition, we are implementing the 2001 Durban Declaration on combating all forms of racial discrimination. We are also carrying out the mandate of the Durban Programme of Action by establishing a governmental commission to eliminate racial discrimination within our own country once and for all.

What our countries regard as militant solidarity would be a form of justice achieved through concrete actions on the part of the former colonial countries, which supported their own development by plundering Latin America and Africa.

With regard to cooperation and strengthening South-South relations, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has maintained ongoing relations with African countries, increasing its direct diplomatic relations with more than 12 countries and with many other constituencies over the past two years. We have increased the number of our representatives on the continent, and we unambiguously consider the region

an ally. During the past year, Venezuela has entered into new agreements with various African countries — many of which are least developed countries — promoting economic, social, cultural and energy cooperation, multilateralism and respect for international law.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Cooperation and solidarity among peoples are the guiding principles of our foreign policy and we have increased our cooperation with Africa in areas such as institution-building, combating desertification and providing humanitarian aid in the form of food and assistance in the wake of natural disasters. We intend to provide follow-up and support throughout the process of opening an office of the Economic and Social Development Bank of Venezuela in Mali. That institution will carry out the commitment of Hugo Chávez Frías, President of the Republic, to open the Bank of the South on the African continent.

All of this is being accomplished without the usual perverse conditionalities that violate sovereignty and prevent the establishment of genuine poverty reduction programmes through national development plans and strategies. Such contributions to development objectives demonstrate that, with political will and commitment to humanism, it is possible to build a world different from the one that the economic centres of world power and the international financial institutions — which bear the pernicious stamp of neo-liberal thought — seek to impose on us.

Finally, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela wishes to express its commitment to developing countries and their legitimate objectives — regardless of how those countries are categorized — to move ahead in building a world based on relations of justice, equality and equity that will enable us to make progress in overcoming the terrible scourges besetting humanity. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, with an independent voice, thus seeks balance and equilibrium with a view to achieving justice, peace and security.

Mr. Bossina (Congo) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, on the quality of the reports he has submitted to us for the fourth consecutive year on the progress made in implementation and international support with regard to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Those reports once again draw our attention not only to the challenges and constraints to be addressed and overcome, but also to the progress made over the past 12 months in implementing NEPAD.

I associate myself with the statements made by Mr. Kumalo, Permanent Representative of South Africa, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by the representative of the Gambia on behalf of Africa. Like preceding speakers, I should like to make a few additional comments.

Five years ago, African leaders adopted NEPAD, whose objective is to achieve high and sustained growth so that Africa can reduce the poverty of its peoples and become better integrated into the global economy. As we carry out this new assessment, we can say that some progress has been made despite the magnitude of the challenges, such as the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, mercenarism, conflicts, the illegal exploitation of natural resources, youth unemployment, humanitarian crises, illegal migration and HIV/AIDS.

However, we must welcome the efforts of African countries to promote peace and security and to take steps aimed at implementing NEPAD's priority programmes and projects in the areas of transport, energy, water, health, education, information technology, the environment, agriculture, science and technology and, in particular, governance. Those efforts, which give new impetus to NEPAD, will produce lasting results if they had the necessary support from our partners.

Here, I should also like to welcome the ongoing mobilization of international opinion on behalf of Africa and the support that development partner Governments have provided to the continent. Specific initiatives aimed at implementing NEPAD programmes have been carried out, pledges have been announced, and commitments have been undertaken. We expect that the progress made in debt relief will be extended to official development assistance and trade.

With a view to new impetus and substantial support for NEPAD's implementation, I should like to support the main recommendations suggested by the Secretary-General in his reports: strengthening support for the African continent by adopting concrete measures to increase the momentum for NEPAD's implementation; resolving institutional issues by

integrating NEPAD into African Union structures and mechanisms; supporting the private sector; ensuring that Africa's development partners honour their aid commitments within a reasonable time frame; helping Africa to diversify its economy by improving its export structure; ensuring better coordination of the activities of United Nations bodies that help to support Africa's development efforts; and improving the quality of the support given to NEPAD by the United Nations system, through regular and in-depth consultations with the African Union.

Before I conclude, I should like to congratulate the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa and his Office for their continuous advocacy for Africa, and for NEPAD in particular.

After this overview, I wish to reaffirm my delegation's support for the Secretary-General's efforts. Their areas of focus constitute the best context for methodical implementation and efficient support of NEPAD.

Mr. Scott (United States of America): We should like to thank the Secretary-General and the members of the Secretariat, who have provided us with the report (A/61/212) on progress in implementation and international support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the progress report (A/61/213) on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa and the report (A/61/218) on the Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa.

The United States congratulates the African members of the New Partnership for Africa's Development on five years of accomplishments that are enhancing economic growth and good governance across sub-Saharan Africa. Support for NEPAD is a key pillar of our assistance to our African partners. During the past five years, the United States Government has collaborated with NEPAD on a wide variety of programmes in agriculture, power, infrastructure, trade development and other areas.

As the Group of Eight (G-8) summit in Gleneagles demonstrated, there is strong support among world leaders for focusing more attention on African development needs. The United States has been and will remain a leader in this effort. At a March 2002 United Nations Conference held in Monterrey, Mexico, which, as members know, produced the Monterrey Consensus, the United States pledged to increase its foreign assistance by over 50 per cent by 2006. We met that pledge three years early. United States official development assistance (ODA) for 2003 was $16.3 billion, more than 60 per cent higher than it was in 2000 — and we have not rested. United States ODA for 2005 increased 27 per cent over the 2004 levels, a figure that would actually be considerably higher if we included funds for Iraqi reconstruction. Our ODA growth rate averaged 22.4 per cent over this period — nearly double the 11.7 per cent average for other Group of Seven (G-7) nations.

We have heard during the course of this debate figures that Africa's share of world trade and gross domestic product (GDP) remains disturbingly low — both under 2 per cent. We are trying to do something about this, both through increased ODA and through expanded trade opportunities with the United States, such as those provided by the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act. While United States imports from Africa have increased by 40 per cent since 2000, to $50.3 billion, we would like to see more of that increase come from non-oil products.

Increasingly, our aid is focused on African development. From 2000 to 2005, United States ODA to Africa grew by over 250 per cent, to $4.1 billion in 2005. A major example is our partnership with Ghana. Ghana has made the important decisions necessary for long-term success. They are a democracy and they are committed to good government, and transparency and to investing in their people's education and health. Examining its situation, Ghana concluded that a priority should be further efforts to stimulate agriculture, promoting exports and encouraging additional investments in that sector. On the basis of these commitments, the Millennium Challenge Corporation signed a $547 million compact last August. This will help Ghana to achieve higher rates of economic growth, thus lowering poverty through the most powerful tools of all: prosperity, job creation and entrepreneurship. In fact, we see the Millennium Challenge Account programme and NEPAD as sharing the same philosophy: support for good governance, better delivery of services, particularly in health care and education, and economic freedom and liberties.

As members know, the United States is the first non-African country to establish a diplomatic mission

to the African Union. Our commitment is based in part on our belief that the African Union is building a solid framework for economic policy based on the principles contained in NEPAD. This includes a commitment by African leaders to take responsibility for their own development and to adopt the economic policies required to attract investment and to create jobs.

Returning to NEPAD, the United States remains committed to supporting important NEPAD initiatives, particularly the African Peer Review Mechanism. We view the African Peer Review Mechanism as an important part of African leaders' commitments to providing political, economic and corporate governance to foster a better climate for transformational development.

Another major NEPAD programme that we are committed to supporting is the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. We support the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme in six countries that are meeting their pledges to increase support and attention to the agricultural sector. In addition, we are collaborating with efforts in hunger hot-spots to develop a process and plan to address the policy and technical barriers that make countries prone to famine. Ultimately, we hope to assist those countries in integrating into the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme.

Regarding power generation, we are working with the Economic Community of West African States and NEPAD on the West African Powe. Pool project. The West African Power Pool will help West African countries achieve power trading and better regional transmission of electricity, lowering business costs and increasing economic growth.

The United States welcomes the report on the Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries. Following our President's commitment in June 2005 to reduce the incidence of malaria in the world by 50 per cent, we have begun new programmes to fight malaria in six highly endemic countries. We will expand to a further four countries in 2007 and five more in 2008. Ultimately, we expect to reach more than 175 million people in 15 countries.

In sum, the United States supports the members of NEPAD and the people of Africa in achieving peace and stability, freedom from highly endemic disease and prosperity through trade and economic freedom. Our commitment will not falter, and we stand ready to work with our African partners and other assistance donors to meet Africa's challenges and recognize its immense promise.

Mr. Carmon (Israel): At the outset, I would like to note with satisfaction the Assembly's decision this year to hold a joint debate on the issues of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) issues, the causes of conflict in Africa and the Decade to Roll Back Malaria. In our opinion, this accurately reflects not only the close link between peace and development, but also the need to focus the work of the Organization, a principle we strongly support.

Israel welcomes the fourth consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support of NEPAD (A/61/212). The report comprehensively outlines the new momentum for Africa's development stemming from actions taken by African countries, as well by the international community and the United Nations system. At the same time, the report offers a coherent analysis of the challenges and constraints faced at each level. The principle set forth in this report, that of delivering on commitments, is one that Israel wholeheartedly supports, not just in words, but in deeds as well.

As in the past, Israel wishes to reiterate its strong support for the development initiatives and principles adopted by the African Union. This enterprise — led, owned and managed by the African Union — is an outstanding example of how ownership and regional cooperation can be harnessed to pursue development and address challenges. By striking an appropriate balance between the principles of responsibility, solidarity and partnership, NEPAD has improved the chances for progress and prosperity on that troubled continent.

In this regard, we commend the accession of 25 African countries to the African Peer Review Mechanism and the convening this past May of the sixth African Governance Forum in Kigali, dedicated to implementing that Mechanism. As the Mechanism reflects a genuine desire of African nations to make good on the promises of NEPAD — good governance, democracy, peace and security, human rights and sound economic management — we would like to encourage other countries to join it soon.

Israel also welcomes the commitment of the United Nations to strengthen collaboration and

coordination among its components in order to provide the support necessary for the effective implementation of NEPAD and endorses the recommendations as specified in that report.

Israel has always considered its relations with Africa to be of the highest priority. From the late 1950s, while still a developing country, Israel sought to build development partnerships with the newly independent States of sub-Saharan Africa. With this long record of cooperative work throughout Africa and the continuing tradition of friendship and solidarity, Israel offers its experience and expertise to assist NEPAD in succeeding and in helping the African continent to flourish, sharing our know-how in areas such as food security, empowerment of women, education and health, bilaterally and with the participation of United Nations development funds and programmes. Allow me to elaborate briefly on just a few of those programmes.

In addition to bilateral aid and training programmes, Israel actively supports international initiatives such as the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) programme and the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative for debt reduction. Israel has already forgiven the debt of a number of African countries and will continue to consider additional debt relief to others, to the extent that resources allow.

In 2005, 467 African trainees from 32 countries participated in 94 different courses in Israel in the fields of agriculture, community development, education, medicine and public health, science and technology, small enterprises and other realms. An additional 610 African trainees participated in on-site courses in 11 African States. During that year, Israel dispatched 21 experts for short-term and long-term consultancies in 12 different countries on the continent.

Israel's Centre for International Cooperation (MASHAV) cooperates in a joint programme with Ethiopia's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to assist Ethiopian agricultural development. In February 2005, an agreement was signed for a three-year programme to provide technical support to Ethiopia through activities focusing on capacity-building for smallholders and commercial farmers, cooperative members and water-user groups, as well as dairy herd improvement, small-scale irrigation and water management, horticulture, crop production, soil conservation and biotechnology. MASHAV and Save the Children Norway-Ethiopia also signed a three-year cooperation agreement to establish a joint programme for child-development activities in Ethiopia. The agreement will strengthen the capacity of Ethiopian organizations dealing with child-development issues.

Israel has established the Techo-agricultural Innovation for Poverty Alleviation (TIPA) programme based on the African Market Garden concept, focusing on poverty reduction and crop productivity in various regions in South Africa. The system, developed by the Israeli Centre for International Agricultural Development, which includes a mix of annual and perennial crops and a special low-pressure drip irrigation system, has significantly increased yields and lowered the risks faced by subsistence farmers in arid and semiarid zones. The project has expanded from 20 small-scale family drip irrigation systems to 120. MASHAV has since extended TIPA to other areas of South Africa, and by 2005 the Cradock project was being run by the farmers themselves. Other Israeli African Market Garden projects are being pursued in nine French-speaking countries in West Africa as well, with a total of 280 gardens now running in eight Sahelian countries.

The malaria pandemic in Africa, which claims the lives of an estimated 3,000 infants and children daily, is a tragedy of unparalleled proportions. Malaria is a curable disease, and its answer lies in strengthening African medical and public health infrastructure. Israel has been doing all it can to do so, in particular by addressing human resources for health crises. In addressing HIV in Africa, two courses especially designed for Ethiopian medical staff on the training of trainers and HIV antiretroviral therapy took place at Israel's Aharon Ofri International Training Centre. Over 27 doctors and nurses participated in those courses. The health care teams included social workers and cultural mediators, who often provide care and combat non-adherence to drug treatment. Training covers issues such as HIV drug resistance and paediatric AIDS, and a meticulous chain of reporting is maintained within the team.

Israel also conducts blindness prevention and eye-care missions in African partner countries with limited eye treatment facilities. These missions are undertaken by teams of two or three Israeli ophthalmologists in local hospitals or clinics. Hundreds

of surgical procedures are performed by the visiting Israeli teams, working together with local staff, to restore sight to many patients. Israeli ophthalmologists also train local personnel, and ophthalmologic equipment and supplies are donated by the Government of Israel. During 2005 such missions took place in Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Kenya and Tanzania.

Although our assistance may appear rather modest to some, one must remember that as a nation of barely six million citizens, carrying heavy financial burdens from the need to defend its existence, Israel's per capita contribution to Africa's future is among the most significant in the world. Based on an enduring friendship, we are committed to working together with African countries to build on the momentum of NEPAD and to reach its promised outcome. We are doing so because we are convinced that the hardships of Africa are not a burden, but a shared responsibility. We are doing so because we believe in the potential of Africa and its people. We are doing so because we believe in fulfilling commitments.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his fourth consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), contained in document A/61/212; the report on the Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa, contained in document A/61/218; and the report on implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, contained in document A/61/213.

The report on NEPAD, which coincides with the fifth birthday of the Partnership, conceived by Africans for Africans, reveals that we are living at a time of great political will and commitment at all levels towards achieving Africa's renewal through sustained economic growth and sustainable development. However, the key challenge remains: translating commitments and will into tangible actions and projects that are consistent with NEPAD throughout the continent.

We are pleased to see that some projects conceived under NEPAD are being implemented in the areas of infrastructure, information and communication technologies, health, education, the environment, agriculture, science and technology, gender mainstreaming and civil society involvement. There are visible signs of progress, owing to a global partnership involving Member States, United Nations system organizations, regional and subregional organizations, international and regional financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and civil society. It is our hope that what has been achieved in certain sectors in certain regions and countries can be duplicated throughout the continent.

Africa is committed to good governance. Accordingly, it established the African Peer Review Mechanism. This is a critical instrument for advancing reforms in governance and socio-economic development and for building capacity to help implement national development plans. I cannot refrain from mentioning the accession to the Mechanism of 25 African countries, including Angola. Of these, many have hosted support missions aimed at evaluating national capacity for self-assessment and are preparing national action plans; this constitutes an important step in the road to the African Peer Review Forum.

While there is reason to believe that the Partnership is yielding positive results, there are challenges to Africa and its development partners. Individual Governments in Africa must continue to mainstream NEPAD principles and vision into their development plans and institutions. To that end, my Government is engaged in initiatives aimed at sensitizing its public institutions to NEPAD's pillars and philosophy. In addition, the conception and implementation of projects in the areas of infrastructure, health and education, among others, have been integrated into NEPAD.

Placing Africa on an irreversible path to sustained growth and sustainable development requires coordinated and complementary actions on the part of its development partners. While we acknowledge the renewed efforts, decisive action remains to be taken in a number of important areas. Among these, trade constitutes a fundamental area. We express our concern over the lack of progress in the elimination of trade-distorting domestic price supports and agricultural tariffs, since they hinder Africa's ability to integrate itself into the world economy.

In the area of foreign direct investment (FDI), while recognizing recent increases in the levels of FDI directed to the continent, it is important to note that such investment largely directed to oil, gas or mineral exploitation. Consequently, these flows often augment a country's dependence on one or two commodities and are concentrated on a few countries. In addition, an aggregate examination of these flows falsely leads some to conclude that the entire continent is benefiting from increased levels of investment, whereas the reality is quite different.

To improve flows to non-traditional sectors, African Governments have implemented, and continue to implement, regulatory reforms, including under the NEPAD/Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Africa investment facility. It is our hope that these initiatives will lead to real improvement in the quality of foreign direct investment and the impact it can have in the diversification of African economies.

Lastly, we welcome the recent increases in official development assistance (ODA) to Africa, as well as the establishment of mechanisms to track aid promises. However, we stress that current ODA levels remain significantly below the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income. In addition, recent increases in ODA flows to Africa are allocated to known development activities, such as emergency relief and debt forgiveness. While these are important and necessary objectives, they ought not to undermine or compete with the support needed for the implementation of development projects and programmes envisaged under NEPAD.

United Nations agencies and organizations remain important partners in advocating and delivering international support for Africa. In this regard, we encourage United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to strengthen coordination, cohesion and programming mechanisms as a means of enhancing support for African countries. NEPAD is inextricably dependent on a global partnership where all stakeholders play a pivotal role in its success.

The Government of Angola is encouraged by recent progress in the resolution and prevention of conflict in Africa. In the past year, there have been concrete steps to consolidate peace where previously established and action to re-establish peace where needed. Establishment of the African Union Peace and Security Council, with its leading role in promoting the resolution of conflicts in Africa, is to be commended. Additionally, African countries are participating in and leading peacekeeping operations in the continent, following clear mandates from that Council. Consistent with the will and aspirations of Africans, the Government of Angola is assisting the Democratic Republic of the Congo and others in their quest for durable peace.

At the international level, we welcome the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, which we chair, and this week's launching of a Peacebuilding Fund. Both fill an institutional and operational gap in the establishment of durable peace in the world and in Africa in particular.

The adoption in 2000 of the Abuja Declaration on Roll Back Malaria in Africa marked African leaders' recognition that the devastating effects of that disease could no longer be allowed to spread. This preventable and curable disease is responsible for high infant mortality rates and hinders social and economic development. We welcome ongoing efforts and initiatives to combat the disease, in particular those of a global nature. However, we stress that pledges of support must be converted into effective support. In addition, the proliferation of initiatives can, in some cases, lead to wasteful duplication and under-funding in critical areas.

The Acting President: I call now on the observer of the Observer State of The Holy See.

Monsignor Auza (Holy See): Since its adoption five years ago, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has stood as a guide for the various initiatives that have been implemented to fulfil the promises that were made to the people of Africa. NEPAD has been particularly welcome because it has been an African-owned and African-led process that reflects a common African vision and a shared commitment to eradicating poverty and placing countries, both individually and collectively, on the path to sustainable growth and development. Those objectives are in line with the international commitments to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and to halve extreme poverty by 2015.

NEPAD is also valuable because it is the first properly African development framework to have gained such ground. The strength of this initiative is, in fact, its ability to fuse partnership between Africa's

Governments and its peoples as well as with the private sector and civil society.

That is why my delegation believes there is an urgent need for ongoing creativity in this field. A radically new direction is called for in conjunction with the NEPAD initiative. There is a need to create new forms of solidarity at bilateral and multilateral levels through a more decisive commitment on the part of all, with the complete conviction that the well-being of the peoples of Africa is an indispensable condition for the attainment of the universal common good.

Achieving this goal calls for a new political culture, especially in the area of international cooperation. The slowness in honouring official development assistance (ODA) commitments, the still unresolved question of some foreign debt and the reluctance to give countries concerned special consideration in international commercial relations all need to be addressed urgently. Today, more than ever, a decisive condition for bringing peace to the world is the acknowledgement of the interdependence between wealthy and poor countries, so that development will be understood as a task common to us all. Otherwise, it may undergo a process of regression even in zones marked by progress until now. The Holy See is pleased to see some of these concerns echoed in the report now before us in document A/61/212.

As a means to help build international cooperation and strengthen solidarity, my delegation again calls upon Governments to honour their promises made with regard to debt relief or forgiveness as well as the timely fulfilment of the pledge of devoting 0.7 per cent of gross national income to ODA. It is through such programmes that Governments can begin to focus on providing funds for necessary infrastructure and for social and economic development programmes.

Other issues rightly addressed in the report of the Secretary-General concern the need for educational opportunities for both girls and boys, as well as literacy programmes that are essential in achieving development goals. Furthermore, the Holy See recognizes the importance of protecting the natural environment as a means of exercising humanity's stewardship of creation and safeguarding the riches of the Earth for future generations.

The promising developments of the past year have shown that there is fresh momentum in support of Africa's development. The NEPAD programme of action consists of a set of priorities aimed at making a discernible impact on restoring stability and growth in Africa. Effective implementation of the priorities of the Partnership is key to realizing its promise. The opportunity this provides must be grasped by African leaders and all their development partners as they work to turn pledges into action.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/2 of 19 October 1994, I now call on the observer for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. Gospodinov (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): One year ago, we in the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) came to the conclusion that the time had come to adopt different approaches to dealing with African issues. The old ways of working have not delivered the solutions that people desperately need and deserve. Far too little account has been taken of the expertise available in Africa. For that reason, a lot of well-meaning assistance continues to miss its targets.

We believe that every organization with the capacity to help should do so. But each should do what it does best and should seek to coordinate its work with others. Africa presents a clear case for better coordination and partnerships, and this debate provides an opportunity to show how we combine our expertise with the capabilities of others to make things happen.

The IFRC and its member national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are widely accepted as leaders in health promotion at the community level, where health matters most. We build on our grass-roots presence to provide the human resources that are essential to assisting populations at risk from diseases like malaria. For example, in Niger, we worked with the local Red Cross, the Niger Ministry of Health and other partners to distribute more than 2 million mosquito nets to mothers of children under 5 years of age and to vaccinate children against polio throughout the country. With a grant from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, we dedicated two weeks to distributing long-lasting insecticide-impregnated nets and to an intensive polio immunization campaign. This was made possible thanks in large part to our partnerships at the national level and the community reach of Niger Red Cross volunteers. These young people were able not only to reach households that the Government health system

could not normally access but also to allay the fears and myths surrounding polio vaccination, thanks to the trust afforded to the young volunteers by the communities themselves.

Now, we have taken this experience into other settings, including into African countries affected by cholera. We have brought together Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, ministries of health, the World Health Organization, organizations like Médecins sans frontières and local actors to address the threat of cholera, by educating the public about health issues and improving water and sanitation conditions. Indeed, the threat of cholera is a problem of serious proportions in some African countries, and we are trying our best to mitigate it.

Our approach in addressing disease reflects our general approach to disasters and emergency management. It is clear that simple economic assistance is never enough. Instead, local communities must be involved in the design of interventions: building their capacity is critical to long-term planning. Without capacity-building, recovery will be unsustainable, and an opportunity to build resilience will have been missed.

When we speak of the trust of communities, we recognize that our people — our young volunteers — will be trusted only if they function with efficiency and integrity. Thus, the IFRC supports strengthening the capacity of its member national societies, to deliver services to the most vulnerable people in their countries. The Madagascar Red Cross, for example, decided to rebuild its organization so that it could more effectively address issues of vulnerability in accordance with our fundamental principles. We assisted our colleagues from Madagascar with the development of their strategic plan and the facilitation of their governing board elections from the grass roots to the national level. Governance of our national societies and accountability are very high on our agenda.

We also seek to ensure that our members are well prepared to play a contributing role alongside Governments and international organizations. In Somalia, after many years of conflict, the Somali Red Crescent remains united and stands as a well-functioning institution. Its strength in health and care is well recognized by people throughout the country, and it covers a wide range of activities in this area, together with the Government and other stakeholders.

There are similar stories in many countries in Africa, but the point I wish to stress today is that more and more of our national structures are being recognized by their Governments for the role they can play in development, especially by implementing health and care programmes and by attracting, educating and deploying a strong volunteer base. The fact that our country organizations are able to work as auxiliary partners to public authorities is central to their success.

As the President of the General Assembly rightly identified, in recommending the theme of "implementing a global partnership for development" for this year's general debate, partnerships are the critical ingredient. No organization or network alone can solve these global problems. That is why Dr. Mukesh Kapila, our newly appointed Special Representative on HIV/AIDS, travelled to southern Africa recently to participate in the launching of the ART Toolkit, developed jointly by the IFRC, the World Health Organization, UNAIDS and Southern Africa AIDS Information Discrimination Service. As part of this, an agreement was signed with the WHO Regional Office for Africa, and will be followed by the launching of a five-year southern Africa HIV and AIDS appeal, seeking $300 million.

These actions are brought together at a very high level of our administration. Our Governing Board held a special debate on Africa in June 2006, recognizing the need to build new and more effective partnerships, including with the private sector, and to develop programming for the vulnerable, with the long-term and Millennium Development Goals in mind. These solutions have been promoted by our African national societies and the African members of our Governing Board. As we plan for our Governing Board session in Addis Ababa next year, we hope other African institutions, as well as external partners and donors, will join us, so that we can together make a difference for the vulnerable people of the continent. The malaria bed-net project in Niger is evidence of how easy it is to make great things happen. We just need to expand the attitude and determination to encompass the whole continent.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 48 and 62.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.